Government of Yukon

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Work Progresses on Elk Management Plan

WHITEHORSE - With steps in place to address winter ticks, the Yukon government will work with First Nations and stakeholders in the coming months to further pursue the objectives identified in the Elk Management Plan including a proposed limited harvest of elk in 2009, Environment Minister Elaine Taylor announced today.

"This is consistent with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board recommendation to enable a limited elk harvest once a strategy had been developed to deal with winter ticks in the elk herds," Taylor said.

A limited harvest of elk, as identified in the Elk Management Plan, can serve a number of management objectives including: reducing elk-vehicle collisions, reducing crop depredation conflicts with farmers, increasing the appreciation and value of elk as a wild food, and further reducing the risk of winter tick transfer to other wildlife species.

The Elk Management Plan was adopted in June 2008. It calls for a healthy, viable elk population in Yukon, responsible management of elk habitat and range, understanding the potential impact of elk on the land, and greater human use and appreciation of elk. The plan incorporates advice given by First Nations, biologists, Renewable Resources Councils and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board.

Actions announced earlier to contain the spread of winter ticks include a recapture of the Takhini herd and capture of the Braeburn herd in late winter, studies on winter tick ecology to assess the risk that they pose to wildlife, and developing a long-term winter tick surveillance plan to learn more about winter tick distribution and abundance.

The Elk Management Plan can be viewed at ***www.environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca*** under What's New.

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